Iberolacerta cyreni - Cyren's Rock Lizard

Cyren's Rock Lizard is a self-confident mountain lizard. This robust species can be seen basking on rocks during the whole afternoon. They even seem to be unimpressed by noisy groups of hikers, which may be quite numerous as this lizard's habitats are frequented by weekend tourists from the Madrid area.

Two subspecies of this stolical lizard are currently recognized:
- The nominate subspecies occurs in the Sierra de Guadarrama north of Madrid.
- Subspecies castillana occurs further west, in the Sierra de Gredos and some adjoining mountain ranges.

Within its habitat, the nominate subspecies has to compete with Podarcis muralis and meanwhile even with Podarcis guadarramae which increasingly occupies high altitude habitats. Climate warming may enhance this development.

Females of both Podarcis species may be distinguished by their light dorsolateral lines. Furthermore, Podarcis muralis frequently shows orange throats. Podarcis guadarramae is significantly smaller than Iberolacerta cyreni.

In the Sierra de Gredos, subspecies castillana only has to share its habitat with some Iberi (and the mentioned Iberis). This well-adapted mountain species inhabits even the rocky peak areas without any vegetation up to approx. 2600 meters.

Iberolacerta cyreni differs from the other western Iberian Rock Lizards by not showing blue ocelli on the shoulders.
Subsp. cyreni, male E / Puerto De La Mócuela (Sierra de Guadarrama). 03.10.2010 - Note the absence of blue ocelli.

Subsp. cyreni, male E / Puerto De La Mócuela (Sierra de Guadarrama). 10.09.2014 - Specimens of the nominate subspecies are less colourful compared with subspecies castillana.
Subsp. castillana E / Sierra de Gredos (Avila), 25.09.2010 - A male, displaying in front of the photographer.

Subsp. castillana E / Sierra de Gredos (Avila), 25.09.2010 - some specimens show greenish-reddish iridescence.
The surroundings of Laguna Grande de Gredos (Avila / Spain) are ruled by ibex (Capra pyrenaica) and Iberolacerta cyreni.